

102 - 30 Concourse Gate
Ottawa, ON K2E 7V7
Tel: 613-224-8072

December 18, 2017

The Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
Room 451S, Centre Block
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Wilson-Raybould,

Re: Amendments to the *Criminal Code of Canada* – Bestiality and Animal Fighting

As a diverse group of leaders from different sectors and regions across the country, we applaud your commitment to update the *Criminal Code of Canada* as it pertains to bestiality and animal fighting. We offer our support in amending the *Criminal Code*, as set out below, to help protect the safety of Canadians and improve the welfare of all species of animals.

Bestiality

As you are aware, due to the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R v. D.L.W.*, a legislative gap has opened, effectively legalizing the sexual abuse of animals that falls short of penetration. The status quo risks normalizing harmful sexual behavior, jeopardizes animal welfare in Canada, and ultimately fails to properly address the sexual exploitation of vulnerable members of society, including children.

We therefore urge the government to remedy the legislative gap and clarify the issues described by the Supreme Court in *R. v. D.L.W.* by defining the term “bestiality” to mean any contact for a sexual purpose between a person and an animal.

Animal Fighting

Encouraging, aiding or assisting at the fighting of animals is an offence under the *Criminal Code*. Maintaining a facility for cockfighting is an offence, but maintaining a facility for animals other than cocks is not an offence, nor is the training of animals to fight. The *Criminal Code* currently prioritizes cockfighting over other types of animal fighting, and makes a greater offence of attending a cock or other animal fight than of breeding, training or transporting animals to fight or of profiting from the crime. Recognizing that animals other than cocks can be trained to fight, there is a need to update the *Criminal Code* provisions dealing with animal fighting to explicitly include all species of animals and to add an offence of profiting from animal fighting.

The intended scope of the update should cover all species of animals equally rather than the current situation which outlaws some animal fighting activities only for cocks. It is not our

intent however, for these provisions to apply to situations of training or use of an animal for protection, such as guardian dogs which are legitimately used within the agricultural industry. Nor is the intent to cover the training of animals for hunting purposes.

Canada's agricultural sector has a long history of responsible stewardship and continuous improvement in animal care standards and performance, as the science and our understanding has advanced. Agricultural producers care deeply about their farm animals and wish to ensure that all animals are treated respectfully and equitably. And those of us working with Canada's agricultural community strongly share the same conviction. We therefore encourage an update to Canada's laws to address the above-noted shortcomings in relation to bestiality and animal fighting during its review and update of the *Criminal Code*.

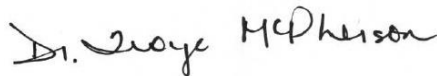
Sincerely,



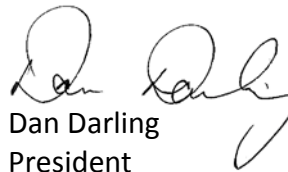
Ron Bonnett
President
Canadian Federation of Agriculture



Barbara Cartwright
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Federation of Humane Societies



Dr. Troye McPherson
President
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association



Dan Darling
President
Canadian Cattlemen's Association



Benoît Fontaine
Chair
Chicken Farmers of Canada



John Ross
Executive Director
Canadian Pork Council



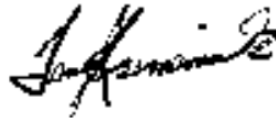
Roger Pelissero
Chairman
Egg Farmers of Canada



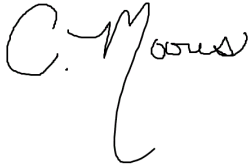
Jack Greydanus
Chair
Canadian Hatching Egg Producers



Mark Davies
Chair
Turkey Farmers of Canada



Terry Kremeniuk
Executive Director
Canadian Bison Association



Catherine Moores
President
Canada Mink Breeders Association



Phil Kolodychuk
Chairman
Canadian Sheep Federation



K. Robin Horel
President and C.E.O.
Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council

cc: Hon. Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C., M.P. (Justice Critic)
Murray Rankin, M.P. (Justice Critic)
Luc Berthold, M.P. (Agriculture Critic)
John Barlow, M.P. (Agriculture Critic)
Ruth Ellen Brosseau, M.P. (Agriculture Critic)
Anthony Housefather, M.P. (Chair, Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights)
Pat Finnigan, M.P. (Chair, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food)